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Credits

Solo Flight from More Scary Stories For
Sleep-overs © 1996 by RGA Publishing Group, Inc.
Key To Strands: Front Cover-FC, Super Scary
Story-SSS, Our Haunted World-OHW, Strange But
True-SBT, Puzzles-PUZ, Classic Serial-CS, The
Unexplained-TU.

Photographs: Mary Evans Picture Library Ltd
SBT1(cr), SBT2(tr, blu), TU1(cu, c), TU2(br); Werner
Forman Archives Ltd (Provincial Museum, Victoria B.C.)
OHW2(cr); Fortean Picture Library SBT2(d), (Rene
Dahinden) OHW1(br), OHW2(bl); Science Photo
Library Ltd (David Parker) TU2(tc); Tibet Images (Robin
Bath) TU1(br), (Greta Tensen) TU1(bl); Topham
Picturepoint SBT1(bl, br), TU2(c).

Illustrations: Lee Carter FRONT COVER(b), SSS1-
7(sp); Lee Gibbons SBT1-2(sp), TU1-2(sp); Leo Hartas
PUZ1-3(sp); Kev Hopgood OHW3-4(sp); David
Millgate FRONT COVER(t), PUZ1(tl); Jerry Paris CS1(t);
Andrew Wheatcroft (Virgil Pomfret Agency) CS1-4(sp);
David Wyatt (Sarah Brown Agency) OHW1(d), OHW1-
2(sp), Pop-up.

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have not been able to locate.

Editorial and distribution offices
Eaglemoss Publications Ltd,
7 Cromwell Road, London SW7 2HR
Editor: Jenny Curran **Art Editor:** Chantal Newell
Deputy Editor: Sarah Farley
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Vanessa Morgan
Designers: Andy Archer, Jessica Watts
Picture Editor: Lon Gibbons
Production Controller: Teresa Magnowska
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Printed by: CSM Impact, England
Colour origination by: Colourscan, Singapore

FREE IN
ISSUE 23
Spooky
Pop-up



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THE SPINECHILLER
Collection

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OUR HAUNTED WORLD
Indonesia
Spice of Life

STRANGE BUT TRUE
Terror in Amityville

CLASSIC SERIAL
Wolverden Tower
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THE UNEXPLAINED
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THE UNEXPLAINED
Reincarnation

SOLO FLIGHT



It was the end of January and Australia Day was
coming up. It was also going to be my sixteenth
birthday. Mum and Dad had a special present in
store for me. They were going to let me take my
first solo flight. Although I'd flown our glider
countless times with Dad, this would be the first time I'd be
going up all by myself.

"Are you sure I'm ready?" I asked when they told me.

"It's just a question of experience, Jonathan," my father
replied calmly. "Anyone can fly a glider if they have the right
training. Personally, I'd rather have you at the controls than
half the adult pilots I know!"

"You'll be fine, Jonathan," my mother assured me. Mum was
quite a glider pilot herself. "Of course, if you don't want to..."

"Oh, but I do!" I quickly cut in. "It's just that you've caught
me by surprise, that's all."

"I remember the first time I went solo," my dad said, his
eyes suddenly taking on a weird, faraway look. "I
was the same age as you. It's a feeling you're never
going to forget for as long as you live, son."

As it turned out, Dad was absolutely right.



"Are you ready to go, Jonathan?" my mother called out early on my birthday.

"In a second!" I yelled back. I was in my bedroom getting ready for my big day. I was wearing my lucky green shirt, my lucky jeans with the holes in the knees, my lucky leather belt with the silver buckle, my lucky red socks and, of course, my lucky running shoes. There was only one thing missing.

I went over to my chest of drawers and opened the small box on top of it. Inside, nestled among the various odds and ends I'd collected over the years, was a pilot's silver 'wings' badge.



It had belonged to my grandfather – my dad's dad – who had been an Air Force test pilot and who had died in a flying accident before I was born.

My dad, who was only ten years old at the time, had been given these wings at his father's funeral. For some reason, the wings had not been pinned to his dad's uniform when his body was buried. My father never wore these wings himself, but he thought that I might want to when I became a real pilot. This seemed like the perfect time.

I carefully pinned the wings to my left shirt pocket. Then I checked myself out again in the mirror. The wings hung straight and true, just like I'm sure my grandfather had always flown.

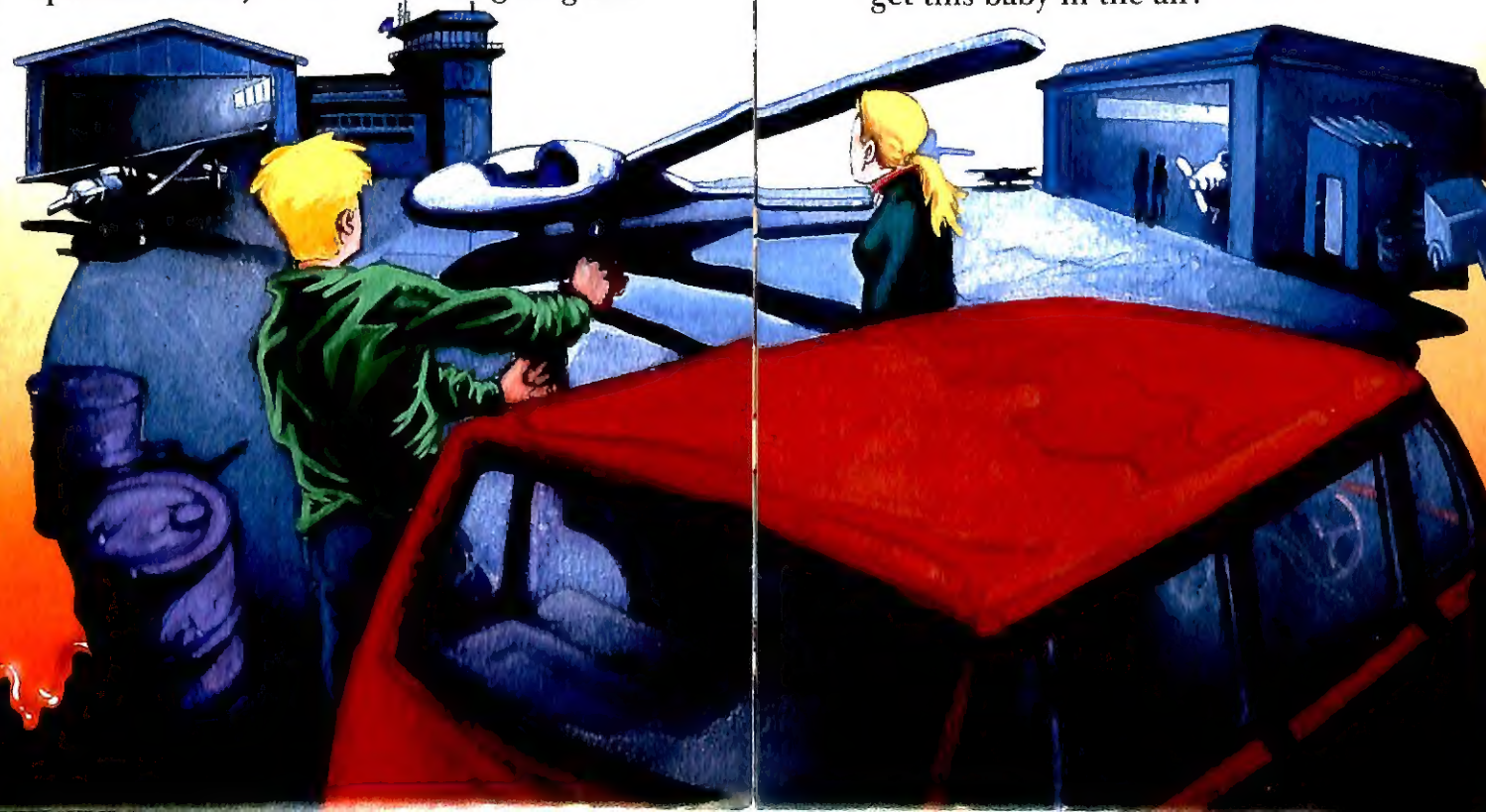
"OK! Let's fly!" I shouted as I thundered down the stairs.



Our glider was kept in a hangar at the Sky Harbour Airport, about fifteen minutes north of town. It was a small private airfield used mostly by amateur pilots at weekends and during holidays. This being a holiday weekend, it was as busy as a toy shop on Christmas Eve.

The weather was perfect for gliding. Mum and Dad had already arranged for the plane to be ready for us when we arrived. Climbing out of the car, I saw our glider, the *Sky Dancer*, sitting on the grass tethered by a towline to the single-engined tug plane that would lift it into the sky.

Gliders are incredibly graceful creations. The *Sky Dancer*, for instance, had a narrow cockpit shaped like a teardrop. Behind that, her fuselage extended back ten metres, tapering into a thin, fragile-looking tail. Her wings spanned nearly twelve metres, giving her



the lift and stability she needed to stay airborne even without a motor. Not designed for any practical reason, the *Sky Dancer* had one purpose and one purpose only: fun.

"Ready to go, Birthday Boy?" my father asked, giving me a warm pat on the shoulder.

"Let's do it," I said, putting my metallic blue helmet over my head.



Five minutes later, I was strapped into the glider's pilot seat. I gave my father the 'thumbs-up,' and he lowered the bubble-shaped cockpit hatch into place. My heart beating wildly, I watched my parents get into the tug plane parked about ten metres in front of me. Then my helmet radio crackled into life.

"You reading me, son?" my father asked. "Loud and clear, Dad," I replied into my helmet's tiny microphone. "Let's get this baby in the air!"

Launching a glider is relatively easy. The tug plane does most of the work. As the glider pilot, all I had to do was release my brakes and let Dad and Mum use their rented plane to tow me on to the runway and up into the wild blue yonder. My only challenge was keeping my rudder straight.

A few minutes later, we were at almost 5000ft and travelling at about 160km per hour – slow for an aeroplane, but pretty fast for a glider.

"Ready to go solo?" Mum asked over the radio. "I bet you're excited!"

My hands were shaking and my throat suddenly felt dry. I took a deep breath, then answered back.

"That's a big ten-four. Ready to release."

Releasing the towline was my job. Taking a deep breath, I reached forward and pulled the lever that disconnected my aircraft from the nylon rope connecting me to my parents' plane. I heard a clunk as the hook let go, then was thrown forward as the glider instantly slowed down. Looking straight ahead, I saw Mum and Dad's plane quickly pull away.

Now there are many differences between flying in a glider as opposed to a regular engine-powered aircraft. The first thing you notice about flying in a glider is the lack of sound. In a commercial jet there's always the dull roar of the engines. In small, private planes, like my parents' tug plane, the engines are deafening and the vibrations can make your teeth chatter loudly.

But gliders aren't like that. When you're in a glider, the silence is unreal.

There's no roar of jets. No vibrations. This incredible silence was what I heard as the tug plane circled back



towards the airport and I was left to fly all on my own. For several moments, I just sat back and enjoyed the absolute nothingness of it all. This, I imagined, is what hawks must feel as they circle the skies.



I turned my control stick to the right, causing my glider to bank slightly in the same direction. As it turned and I tilted sideways, I scanned the ground for a likely source of thermals – columns of warm air rising off the earth.

It's these natural updraughts that allow glider pilots to keep themselves airborne for long periods of time even in gentle winds. Because darker areas – like car parks – absorb sunlight and therefore heat the air around them, you always want to look for dark or paved patches of earth when flying a glider. Fly over one of these, and you can gain a few hundred feet without even trying.

It was a very bright, sunny day, so I had no problem finding all the thermals I needed. In fact, even after a full hour

of circling the Sky Harbour area, I was still managing to keep the *Sky Dancer* at between 4000 and 4500ft above sea level. The way things were going, I could probably stay airborne until sunset if I wanted to. After that, the air would cool and I'd find myself drifting back to earth.

However, my parents had no intention of letting me stay in the air that long. In fact, exactly one hour after the towline was released, my helmet radio came to life with the familiar sound of my father's voice.

"All right, Birthday Boy, it's time to bring *Sky Dancer* home," he said.

"Aw, Dad, do I have to?" I protested. I was having so much fun, I really didn't want to stop.

"We're going over to the Jacksons for a barbecue. Don't you remember?" he countered. "We're supposed to be there in an hour."

"Ten-four," I groaned in disappointment.

I adjusted my wing flaps to direct the glider earthward and at the same time began looking for bright patches of earth around which I'd find downdraughts to help bring me down.

Keeping a close eye on my altimeter, I suddenly noticed the oddest thing. No matter what I did to lower my altitude, the glider refused to descend below 4000ft!

"Come on, Jonathan," my father said with some irritation. "I know you like it up there, but you can't stay up there forever."

"I'm trying!" I radioed back. "But I

seem to be caught in some kind of big thermal. I can't seem to lose altitude."

"Try to turn yourself out of it," my mother advised. "Look for bright patches of earth."

"That's what I'm doing!" I insisted.

Indeed, for the next 15 minutes, I used every trick I knew to bring myself down, but nothing worked. In fact, I actually ended up gaining more than 200ft!

Now I was getting scared. All around me I could see other gliders rising and falling with no problem at all. At one point, Dad asked a friend of his, who was also flying a glider, to get in front of me and try to lead me home. Although his plane dropped without a problem, the *Sky Dancer* stayed exactly where she was.

"Dad, I don't know what to do," I radioed, my voice choked with panic.

"What if I can't ever come down?

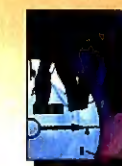
What if I'm stuck up here forever?"

"That's not going to happen," my father assured me. "There must be something wrong with your controls. If nothing else, we can wait until sunset."

And that's exactly what we had to do. For five full hours I circled round and round the Sky Harbour airport, becoming increasingly panicky with each passing minute.

Hungry and thirsty, I watched from my aerial perch as the sun sank with painful slowness below the western horizon, then finally vanished from

sight. All the other gliders had long ago returned to the ground. I was now completely and utterly alone.



My mother radioed, "The temperature's dropping really fast. It has fallen ten degrees in the last

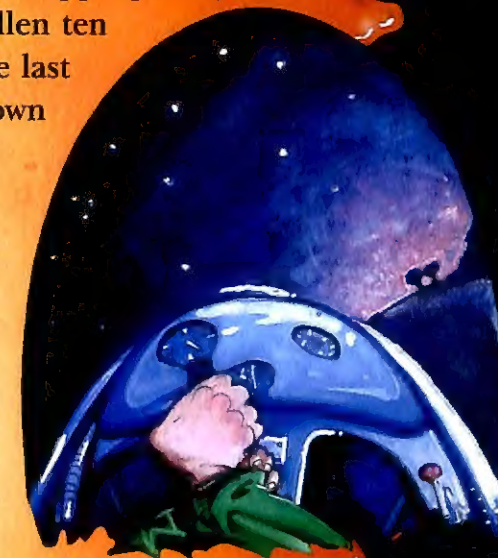
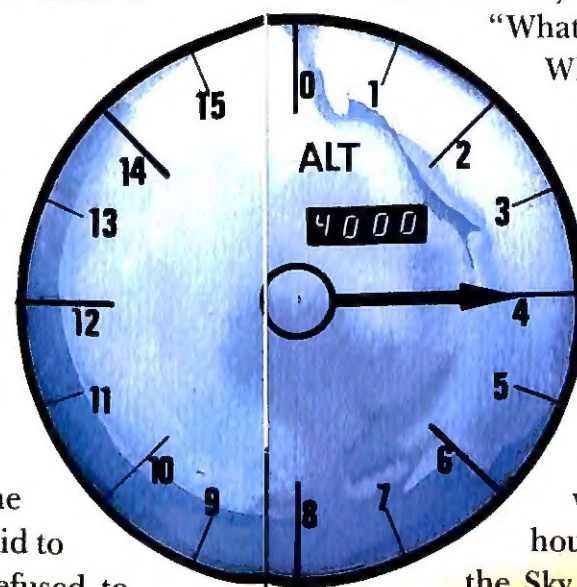
hour. You should be down in no time."

Hearing this, I banked the *Sky Dancer* as tightly as I could and tried my hardest to put the glider into a spiralling dive. But, just as before, the craft absolutely refused to drop below 4000ft.

I'm going to be up here forever, I thought, terrified. A hundred years from now, I'll finally come down, and all they'll find in the cockpit is an old, rotting skeleton!

An hour later, the sky around me was a sea of stars set against a backdrop of inky blackness. I'd never been in a glider at night before – few people have – and the sense of complete isolation could easily drive a person insane. At least in an aeroplane you always had the noise of the engines to keep your senses stimulated. But up here in a glider, with no noise, no light, and virtually no sense of movement, you could quickly begin to feel totally disconnected from any sense of reality.

In fact, I was certain I was going stark raving mad when, gazing out through the



bubble cockpit, I saw two eyes staring back at me. Chilled to the bone, I first told myself that I was either looking at my own reflection, or that it was some distorted reflection of the moon. But then I realised that this was no reflection. The eyes were blank and were part of a face that was definitely not my own.



As I continued to examine the face gazing back at me, I saw that it belonged to a man in his mid-thirties. He had short cropped brown hair, and his uniform collar bore the Air Force insignia.

It took me a moment or two to realise that I'd seen this face before. In fact, it looked out from several framed photographs back home. It was the face of my own grandfather.

"What are you doing here?" I asked the ghostly image floating before me. "What do you want from me?"

But the transparent face just continued to hang in the air outside my cockpit. It seemed to be looking through me, just as I was looking through it.

Unable to stare at this frightening vision any longer, I glanced down at my controls and saw that I was still holding level at 4000ft. And then, as if waking up from a dream, I realised what was happening. My grandfather's spirit was keeping me airborne. Maybe it thought it was helping me, or maybe it wanted me to join it in the

vast beyond, there was no way to tell. I only knew that I had to get it to release me or I could indeed be stuck up here for the rest of my life.

"Grandfather, it's your grandson, Jonathan," I said, struggling to remain calm. "You have to let me go. I want to go home. I want to see my Mum and Dad. I don't want to die up here. Please, Grandfather, let me go."

But the image just stared at me, and my altimeter refused to budge. What more could I do?

And then I noticed something about the spirit's uniform.

There was something odd about it. Something was missing. The pilot's wings!

I immediately looked down at the wings pinned to my shirt. Could these be what my grandfather wanted? Could these be why he was keeping me airborne?

Hands shaking, I carefully removed the wings from my shirt. There was no response from the plane. I put the wings on the floor. Still no change. Finally, I checked my seat belt to make sure

it was secure, then undid the cockpit canopy and opened it just a crack.

Instantly, a burst

of freezing cold wind hit me in the face, and the shock almost made me lose my grip. But I held on and, with my free hand, grabbed the badge off the floor and tossed the wings out into the night. I saw them glisten briefly in the starlight, then vanish from sight.

I let the cockpit canopy fall back into place and locked it. Then I looked at the front of the cockpit bubble... and saw that my grandfather's face had vanished!

Excited, I glanced at my altimeter and saw that the needle was starting to drop. 4000ft... 3950ft... 3900ft...

"Sky Harbour control, this is *Sky Dancer*!" I said into my radio. "I'm coming home."

Just then the sky around me lit up with a blinding flash. A ball of fire seemed to be heading right for me... then seconds later, it disappeared. Stunned, I wondered if I'd just seen my grandfather's angry ghost.

And then I realised.

"Fireworks," I said to myself with relief. "It's the Australia Day fireworks!"

The sky around me exploded in joyous celebration as I continued my rapid descent. And then, as I turned on my final approach to the Sky Harbour runway, I saw for the briefest instant, my grandfather's image in the glow of the fireworks' grand finale. His pilot's wings were now pinned proudly to his chest, and his face seemed to be smiling. As I smiled back, the glow from the fireworks faded out, and my grandfather's ghost disappeared forever.

THE END



OUR HAUNTED WORLD

British Columbia in Canada has its own Wild West, where monsters and beasts lurk in the forests...



SASQUATCH WATCH

For centuries, the Niskia tribe in British Columbia has told of a giant, hairy man-beast they call 'sasquatch'. Witnesses describe him as being about 3m tall with long, strong arms and legs, broad shoulders and a hairless face.

There have been several sasquatch sightings, but no one has ever captured one or studied a corpse. However, in 1924, a man claimed to have been held captive by a sasquatch family of four near Toba Inlet. As they made no attempt to harm him, he said that didn't use his rifle to help him escape.



◀ This strange sasquatch-like creature was said to have been killed by trappers at Lillooet, early this century. No report of such a killing was ever traced. So was this photograph really a hoax?

THE BRIDGE OF SOULS

The path followed by the souls of the dead on their way to the afterlife is often called the Bridge of Souls. The Tlingit native American tribe of British Columbia believe that the rainbow's arch is the path along which the spirits of their loved ones travel.



▲ Native American shamans used a carved soul-catcher to capture the wandering soul of a sick person. They believed that the soul was carried back to the patient, who would then get better.

OGOPOGO'S HOME

Before the unimaginative, practical whiteman came, the fearsome lake monster, N'ha-a-itk, was well known to the primitive, superstitious Indians. His home was believed to be a cave at Squally Point, and small animals were carried in the canoes to appease the serpent. Ogo-pogo still is seen each year - but now by white men!

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & CONSERVATION

OH NO! IT'S THE OGOPOGO!

The Ogo-pogo of Lake Okanagan is Canada's most famous mystery water monster. Named after a British music-hall song, the beast is said to have a very long, serpent-like body, a sheep-like head with two ears or horns and a forked, horizontal tail, like a whale's. In 1974, Mrs B Clark was swimming in the lake when Ogo-pogo bumped into her legs! She turned and saw the 9-metre-long creature flexing its snaky body through the water in a series of upright coils. The Ogo-pogo sounds like a zeuglodon, a serpentine whale thought extinct for 25 million years! Could these ancient creatures have survived to the present day?

TERROR TRIP

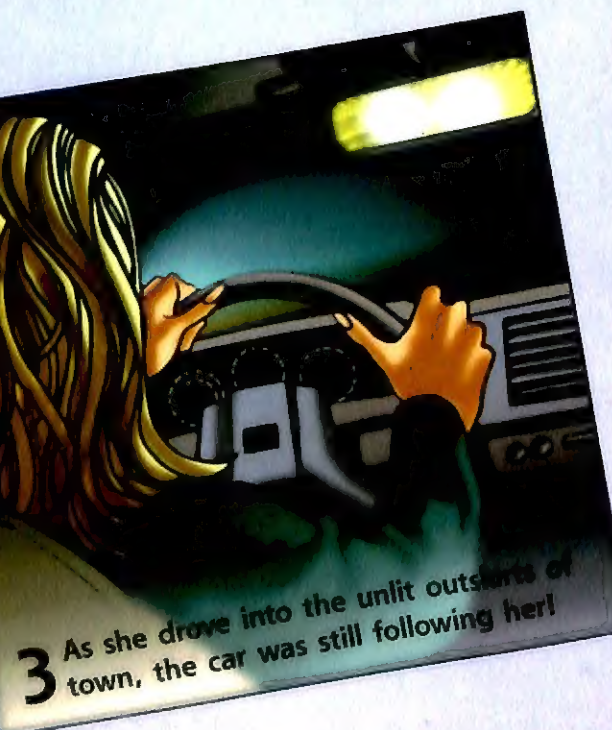
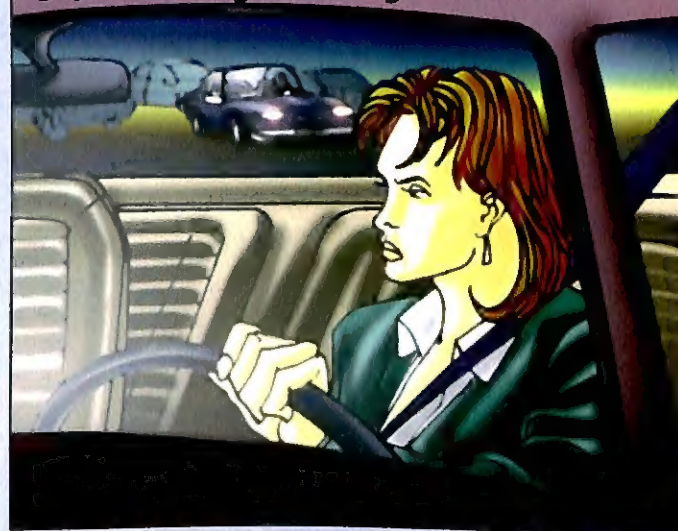
A Canadian friend of a friend had been to a supermarket...



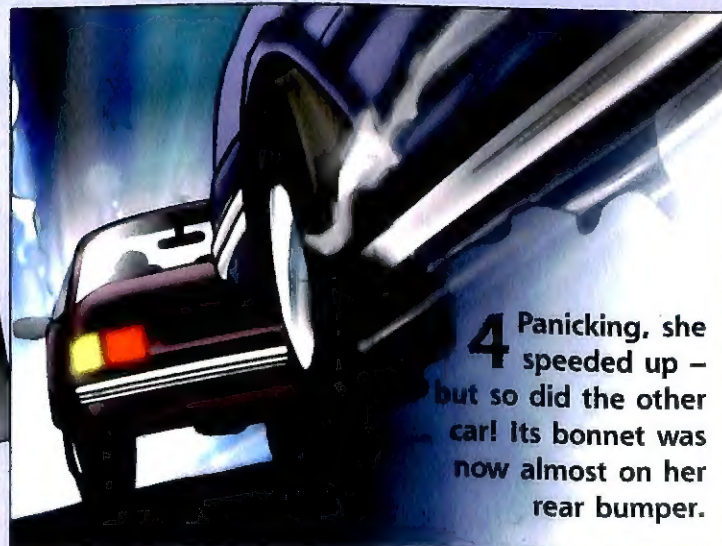
1 As she got into her car, she saw a guy waving at her...



2 Not recognising him, she drove off quickly, thinking, "What a weirdo!" As she drove from the car park, she realised that the weird guy was driving the car right behind her!



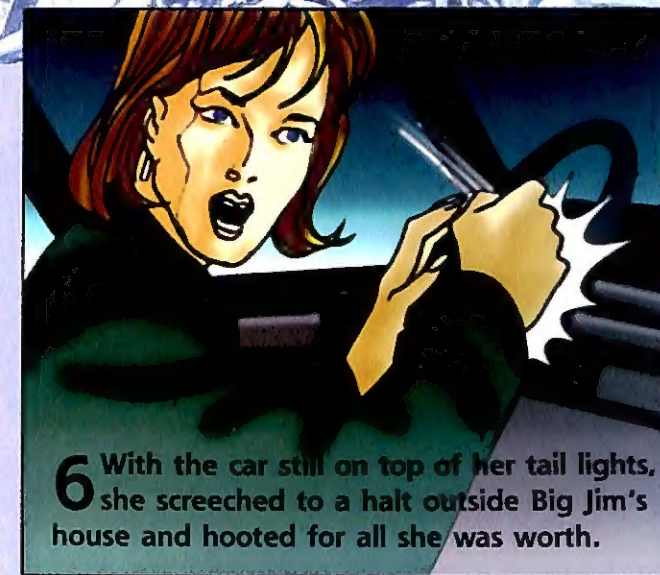
3 As she drove into the unlit outskirts of town, the car was still following her!



4 Panicking, she speeded up – but so did the other car! Its bonnet was now almost on her rear bumper.



5 Really frightened now, she was very relieved to see lights on in the house of her friend, Big Jim the lumberjack.



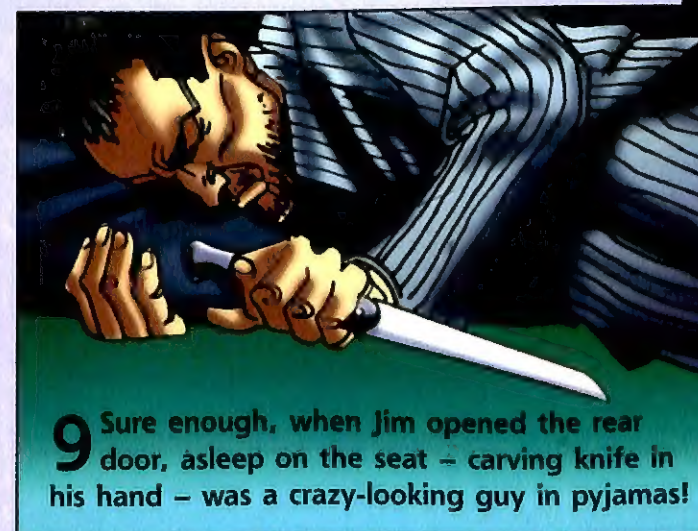
6 With the car still on top of her tail lights, she screeched to a halt outside Big Jim's house and hooted for all she was worth.



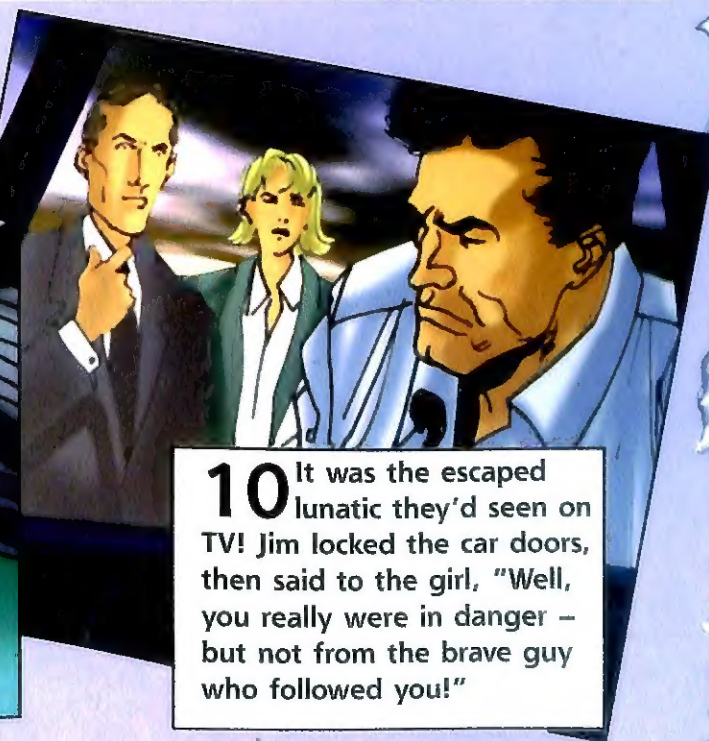
7 Big Jim raced out and the girl ran from the car yelling: "Jim! That guy's been following me! Can you grab hold of him while I ring the police?"



8 As Jim lunged, the guy cried, "Take it easy! I just wanted to warn the lady about the weirdo I saw getting into her car! She wouldn't stop, so I followed to make sure she was OK!"



9 Sure enough, when Jim opened the rear door, asleep on the seat – carving knife in his hand – was a crazy-looking guy in pyjamas!



10 It was the escaped lunatic they'd seen on TV! Jim locked the car doors, then said to the girl, "Well, you really were in danger – but not from the brave guy who followed you!"



THE 'MARY CELESTE'

Special Investigation File: 22

Subject: a mysterious abandoned ship

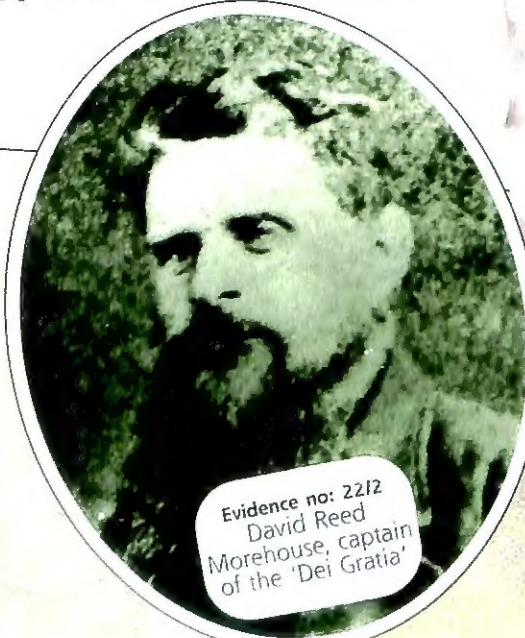
Place: Atlantic Ocean

SpineChiller creates a file

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 5 December 1872, a ship called the 'Dei Gratia' was sailing across the Atlantic Ocean. In the afternoon, a crew member noticed another ship drifting nearby. The captain of the 'Dei Gratia', David Morehouse, sent sailors to investigate.

The mystery ship, called the 'Mary Celeste', had been sailing from New York to Genoa, Italy. But now it was deserted. A half-eaten breakfast was on the table and the lifeboat was missing. But it was not clear why. The vessel was in good condition, there was plenty of food and no evidence of mutiny. Morehouse sailed both ships to Gibraltar and claimed the money for salvaging the 'wreck'. But he could offer port officials no explanation for what had happened.



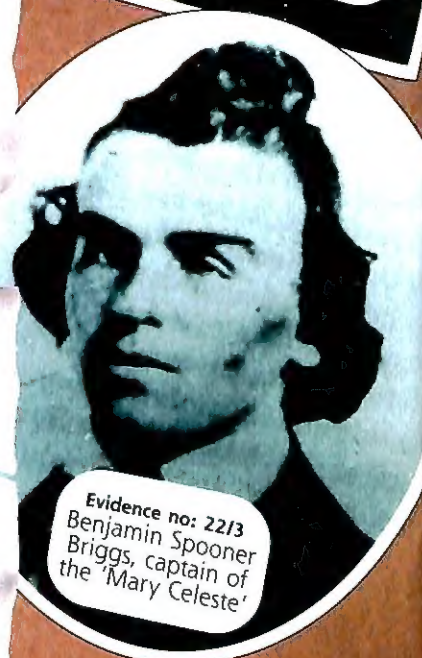
Evidence no: 2212
David Reed Morehouse, captain of the 'Dei Gratia'

1873 GHOST SHIP ENQUIRY

Two sensational explanations for the 'Mary Celeste' mystery have been proposed by an enquiry team headed by Frederick Solly Flood.

First Flood claimed that the ship's crew had broken into the cargo of alcohol, got drunk and killed the captain, Benjamin Briggs, and his family. Then, Flood suggested, they had escaped on the missing lifeboat.

This unlikely story failed to stand up to investigation. So Flood then claimed that Benjamin Briggs had killed his own crew and arranged for the captain of the 'Dei Gratia' to discover the 'Mary Celeste'. The two captains then supposedly shared the salvage money. This second theory was also highly improbable.



Evidence no: 2213
Benjamin Spooner Briggs, captain of the 'Mary Celeste'



Evidence no: 2211
The 'Mary Celeste'

February 1884

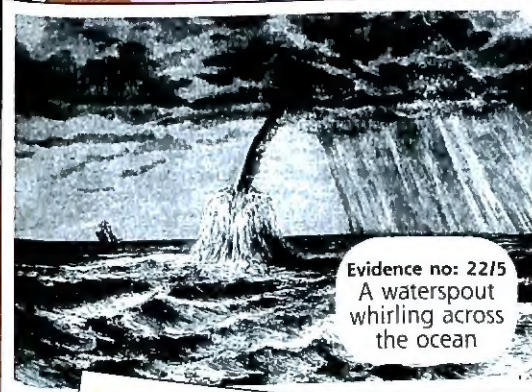
Dear William,

Have you read January's Cornhill Magazine yet? There's a really chilling tale in it about a ship called the 'Marie Celeste'. Apparently a real ship called the 'Mary Celeste' was found drifting empty in the Atlantic some years ago. In the story, the writer imagines what might have caused the passengers' disappearance. But people who know the facts are angry because the story has been sensationalised, and because the author misspelled the ship's name! I don't know if you've come across the writer before, but he is jolly good. His name is Arthur Conan Doyle.

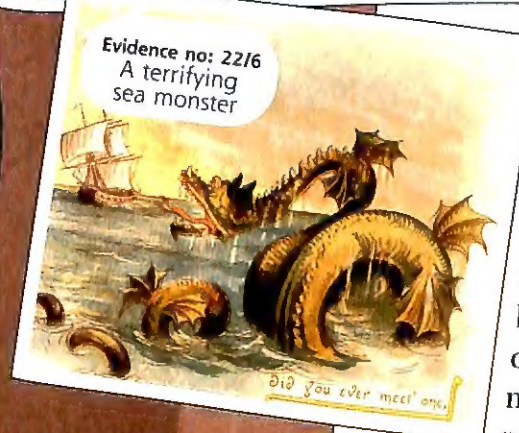
Yours ever,
Albert



Evidence no: 2214
A 1913 illustration of Abel Fosdyk's story



Evidence no: 2215
A waterspout whirling across the ocean



Evidence no: 2216
A terrifying sea monster

WRECK REPORT

Here is the report you requested on the explanations suggested for the 'Mary Celeste' mystery since the official enquiry.

- 1 Several people have claimed to be survivors of the wreck and told elaborate tales about what happened. In 1913, school teacher Abel Fosdyk said that everyone else had fallen into the shark-infested sea when a deck collapsed. But his story has never been proved.
- 2 Some scientists have suggested that a waterspout sucked the ship's passengers up into its whirling centre. Or the waterspout could have sucked water into the ship. This may have caused the captain to believe that it was leaking, and so order evacuation.
- 3 Some truly bizarre explanations have also been suggested. These include the claims that a giant sea monster ate the passengers, and that

aliens carried them off into outer space. No one has ever produced any real evidence for either of these theories.

CONCLUSION

No one has ever been able to provide definite proof of what happened on board the 'Mary Celeste'. It is likely to remain a mystery for ever.

Unexplained



Chapter 2

Wolverden Tower

Retold from a story by Grant Allen

After the last tableau had finished, Maisie turned to talk to her new friends, but they seemed to have slipped away. Just then, Mrs West came up and apologised for leaving her on her own.

"Oh, I've been fine," Maisie said. "First that Oxford student sat beside me, then those two delightful girls with the flowing white dresses came and talked to me."

"Which girls?" asked Mrs West.

Maisie glanced round the room and spotted them in an alcove, drinking red wine. She pointed them out to her hostess.

Mrs West stared at her and with an embarrassed laugh, said, "Oh those two! They must be actresses from London. Well, if you're all right, I must see to my other guests." Then she turned and walked away hurriedly.

The party finished at about midnight. When Maisie went to her bedroom, she saw her new friends talking at the end of the corridor.

"Oh, I thought you'd gone home," she said.

"No, we're staying here," replied Yolande.

Then, with a sudden rush of enthusiasm, Maisie invited them into her room, and the three girls sat by the fire, chatting pleasantly. After a while, Yolande's friend, Hedda, asked Maisie if she could open the

French windows as the room seemed stuffy. Maisie hesitated for a minute, but then politely agreed. When Hedda drew back the curtains, she was surprised to see a sprinkling of snow on the ground. The moon illuminated the church and tower. Hedda gazed up at the starry sky and said excitedly, "What a glorious night it is! Let's go out for a stroll."

Maisie was excited, too, and followed her friends on to the terrace. Linking arms, they walked towards the churchyard gate. But as Maisie glanced back at the well-lit house, she was astonished to see only one set of footprints in the snow – her own! How lightly her friends must walk, she thought.

The three girls talked as they strolled and the next thing Maisie knew they were standing at the top of the steps leading down to the stone burial vault. Yolande started to walk down them, but Maisie drew back in fear.

"You're not going down there!" she whispered.

"Yes, I am," Yolande replied in a friendly voice. "It's all right, we live here."

"This is our home," added Hedda, as if she were talking about a typical house. "We visited your bedroom, so now it's your turn to visit our home."

The girls seemed so keen to show Maisie their home that she felt she couldn't refuse. So she followed them down the steps, even though her legs were trembling. When

she reached the bottom step, Hedda turned and gently held her by the wrist. They stood in front of the heavy bronze doors and Yolande took hold of the gorgon's head on each of the two ringed door handles. She gave a gentle push and instantly the doors swung inwards.

As Yolande crossed the threshold, her body was lit up with a luminous glow and Maisie could see, to her astonishment, the dark outline of her skeleton inside her body.

Maisie was paralysed with fear. "I can't go with you," she cried.

Hedda held her wrist tightly, as if she might drag her in. But Yolande reproved her, telling her that Maisie must only enter of her own accord. Then, still luminous but no longer transparent, Yolande faced Maisie and asked her, in a voice sweet as honey, "Won't you come in with us, my dear?" Maisie looked into her kind eyes and her fear left her.

As Hedda stepped into the gloom, her body, too, was lit up and her skeleton showed through. Then it was Maisie's turn and, as she looked down, she could see her own bones, though not as distinctly as Yolande's and Hedda's.

Once her eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, Maisie saw that they were standing in a huge hall with vast, carved pillars and a domed roof like a mosque. As they walked down the hall, Maisie noticed crowds of people in the aisles and corridors leading off it. Some of the people were dressed in long, flowing gowns like Yolande's and Hedda's, while others wore tunics. As she passed more of these figures, they spoke to her in a strange, flowing language. Gradually, Maisie realised that she could understand their words, and, as she



returned people's good wishes, she was astonished, but not frightened, to discover that she too was speaking this Language of the Dead.

The girls led Maisie into a shadowy chamber at the end of the hall and there, sitting on a huge stone throne at the foot of a sphinx, was a high priest, holding a sceptre. He was attended by a strange assortment of followers. Some were dressed in animal skins and wore strings of sabre-shaped teeth round their necks. Others had collars threaded with lumps of amber or jade. A few had armlets and necklaces of gold.

The high priest stood up, held out his arms with the palms of his hands facing upwards, and said, "Have you brought a willing victim as Guardian of the Tower?"

"We have," chorused the girls.

Maisie had a strange sense that she was

taking part in an ancient ceremony. So, when the priest asked her if she had come of her own accord, she replied that she had. He then asked the girls if she was of royal blood. Yolande replied that Maisie was, as she was descended from the Welsh prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth.

"It is well," announced the high priest. And then, turning to Maisie, he said, "From the earliest times, Britain's builders have believed that every building must have the soul of three maidens to guard it. One is the soul of the maiden whose body lies beneath the foundations; she is the guardian spirit against earthquake and ruin. One is the soul of the maiden who is buried halfway up the building; she is the guardian spirit against storm and battle. One is the soul of the maiden who flings herself off the roof when the building is completed; she is the guardian spirit against thunder and lightning."

A man dressed in Roman armour continued, "In olden times, all men knew these rules of building. But now, when men build with brick and plaster, they do not bother to give their bridges or their towers a guardian spirit. And so their buildings crumble and collapse."

The man stopped and the high priest held out his sceptre.

"We are the Assembly of Guardians and Dead Builders for Wolverden. Before this place was a Christian church it was a temple of Woden, and before that a Stone Circle of the Host of Heaven. And before that again, it was the grave and burial mound of myself, Wolf, and afterwards of my son Wulfhere. We all belong to this holy site, and you are the last to join us."

Maisie felt a cold thrill at being included in this ancient custom. She turned to Hedda and asked her who exactly she was.

"I am Hedda, daughter of Gorm, chief of the Northmen of East Anglia," explained her companion. "When I was taken prisoner by the Saxons, they baptised me. Wulfhere, who was building the first church and tower at Wolverden, asked me if I was willing to be buried under the foundation stone and I agreed. I am the guardian against earthquake and ruin."

"And I am Yolande Fitz-Aylwin," added Yolande. "When the chancel was being re-built by Roland Fitz-Stephen, I chose to be buried in the walls. And now I am the guardian against storm and battle."

Holding her friends' hands tight, Maisie asked, "And what is my task?"

"Your task is to be the guardian against thunder and lightning for the new tower," Yolande explained. "The other guardians are buried alive, and so die a slow death of starvation and choking. But those who guard against thunder and lightning die in the air before they reach the ground, and so their task is easier. Afterwards, they live with us here forever, as our comrades. This glorious privilege is only offered to the purest and best among us."

Maisie, who had been gazing into Yolande's dark eyes, suddenly felt a surge of panic. "But I'm terribly afraid," she

blurted out. "How shall I have the courage to climb the stairs and fling myself off the battlements?"

"You will not be alone," said Yolande reassuringly. "We will come with you and help you. Just think of dwelling here forever with us in peace."

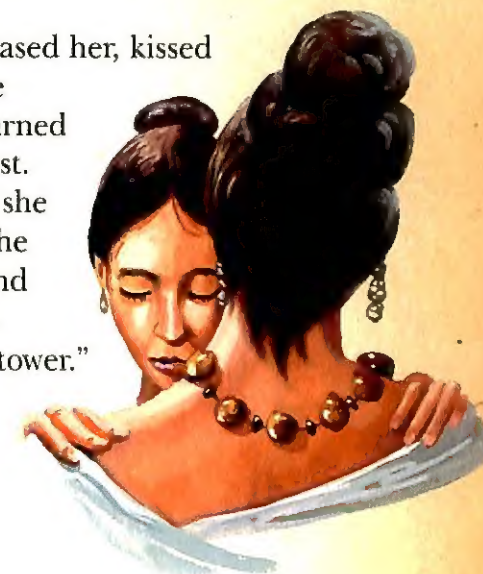
She held out her arms to embrace Maisie and the frightened girl fell into her arms, sobbing hysterically, "Yes, I will do as you ask me."

Yolande released her, kissed

her twice on the forehead and turned to the high priest.

"We are ready," she said gravely. "The Victim agrees and is willing to die.

Lead on to the tower."



WORD POWER

alcove – a small area set back from a surrounding wall

gorgon – a female winged monster from Greek mythology

reproved – told off; rebuked

mosque – a place of worship for Muslims

sphinx – a monster from Greek mythology with a woman's head and lion's body

sceptre – a special stick, symbolizing power, held by monarchs at important ceremonies

chancel – the part of a church containing the altar and the choir stalls

HAUNTED HOUSE

Carradus Carbunde haunted China Carrie's house. He liked to scare but not to frighten. He wriggled under the carpets, but not the rugs. He scattered the playing cards, but not the chess pieces. He would carry ornaments from one place to another, but never throw them. He hid the doll's scarves but never their necklaces. Why?

STRANGE SIGN

The shopkeeper is busily writing for a new sign for his door. Can you make out what it says?

BRICKED UP

The tin soldier is organising some of the toys into building a wall with bricks to keep the spiteful spooks away from the dolls' shelf. Can you help them fill in the blank bricks to spell out words that mean small?

MISCHIEF MIX

One of the ghastly ghouls has been opening up the jigsaw boxes and mixing up the pieces. He has hidden the pieces of two jigsaws around the toyshop. Can you find them and say what they are pictures of?

APE ESCAPE

Can you change ape to man before these apes reach the floor and escape?





BEASTLY BUZZER

One of the horrible hunters is buzzing the toys with the toy lights flashing – and what is teddy spelling out on the abacus? CLUE: Teddy's red beads are dashes.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

FANTASTIC FACT

One of the most famous dice games in history was played by King Olof of Sweden and King Olav of Norway, who threw the dice to see who would own the island of Hisingen. They both threw double sixes, six times in a row! In the end, King Olav threw his dice so hard that one die split in two. The island went to the King of Sweden.

ANSWERS

STRANGE SIGN: Notice is for shop door. It reads: PULL on one side and PUSH on the other. APE ARE ERE ERE EAR MAR MAN HAUNTED HOUSE: Corridors only liked words with CAR in them. MISCHIEF MIX: Castle and Dragon BRICKED UP: TINY, ELFIN / LITTLE / MINUTE / PETITE / SLIGHT / MINUTURE / MINUSCULE BEASTLY BUZZER: Spacecraft is flashing in Morse: Ho! Ho! Got you cornered! Teddy's message: Throw me the rope and we'll mop him up.



REINCARNATION

Reincarnation is the belief that after we die, something about us – our mind or perhaps what we call our soul – is reborn into a different body. You may think this is too incredible to be true, but as much as two thirds of the world's population do believe in reincarnation.

FOURTEEN LIVES

The Dalai Lama, the Buddhist spiritual leader of Tibet, is probably the most famous example claimed for reincarnation. When he dies, his followers will not elect a new leader because they believe that he will be born again into a different body, which will be revealed to them by signs and dreams. The current Dalai Lama (the fourteenth reincarnation) was 'found' when he was just two years old, when he identified the possessions of the previous leader.



▲ AROUND AND AROUND
A Buddhist wheel of life shows the cycle of rebirth.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?
Many Native American and African cultures believe that a personality is reborn again and again into the same family. The name of the ancestor after which a new baby should be named is revealed to the pregnant mother in a dream. If a baby cries a lot, for no apparent reason, they believe it has been wrongly named. In this case the baby is made to cry by splashing water on its face. The names of ancestors are then called out to it. When the child stops crying, it's believed that the correct name has been called out.

◀ **ANIMAL OR VEGETABLE?**
According to Buddhist belief, you could be an animal, insect or even a vegetable next time around!

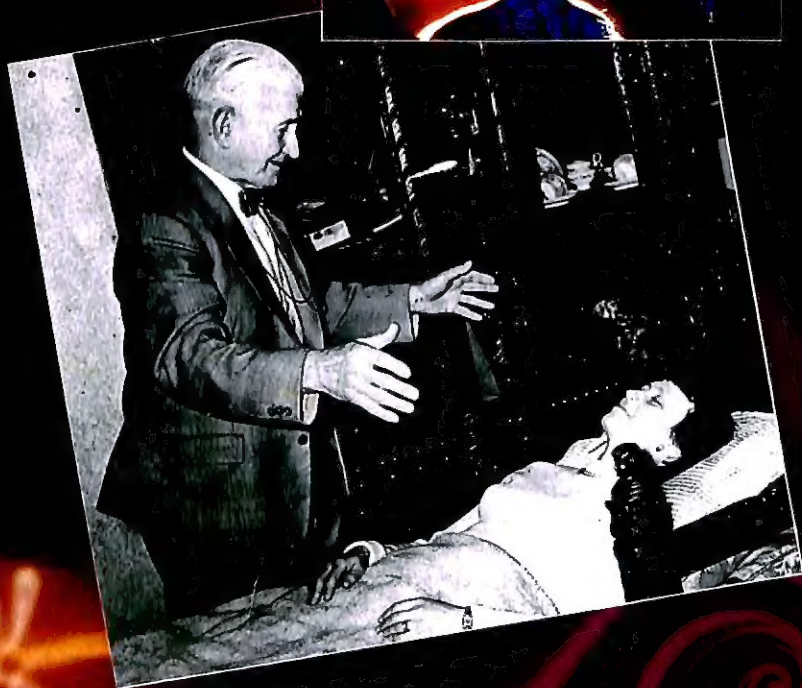
EAST TO WEST ▶
Lama Yeshe helped to make Buddhism popular in the West. When he died in 1984, followers believed he would be born again.



◀ **WEST TO EAST**
Lama Yeshe's connections with the West seem to have continued after he died. Lama Osel, believed to be his reincarnation, comes from Spain.

► SLEEPY... SLEEPY...

A hypnotist can only work with people who are willing to be hypnotised. In such a trance, the person may then appear to remember previous lives – or could it just be a memory of something he or she has seen or heard?



▲ DREAMS OR REALITY?

During the 1950s and 1960s, hypnotist Arnold Bloxham taped many famous cases of people who believed they were remembering their past lives.

HIDDEN TREASURE

In Asian countries, such as India, Thailand and Sri Lanka, belief in reincarnation is very strong. A well-recorded case from 1929 tells the story of a three-year-old Indian girl called Shanta Devi from Delhi who suddenly began to tell her parents that she was a woman called Ludgi from the town of Muttra. She described her former home, her husband and several children – even her death in 1925. When taken to Muttra, she was able to find her house and recognise her children. She even led the authorities to some hidden jewellery!

STRANGE MEMORIES

In the 1950s, a hypnotist called Arnold Bloxham caused quite a stir and sparked off a whole new interest in the West in reincarnation. During some of his taped sessions his subjects began to tell of previous lives. One of his most famous cases was of a woman called Jane Evans who remembered several past lives. One memory was of being Jewish in York, England, during a terrible massacre in 1190. Jane described a crypt under a church, which was only rediscovered after she had told her story.

FACT OR FICTION

Discovering past lives under hypnosis is called hypnotic regression. But people who don't believe in reincarnation say that it isn't a past life that subjects are remembering – just pieces of information which they transform into realistic stories. Another life remembered by Jane Evans was as the wife of a Roman nobleman living in Britain. No one could trace the people she mentioned – until a novel was discovered, which was set during the same period. The characters, who had been made up, had the same names as the people Jane remembered.



▲ A NATURAL CYCLE?

This illustration, based on the Bhagvad-Gita, a Hindu epic story, shows an old man being reborn as an innocent child.